



Making Tracks

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Making Tracks
Missouri Department of Conservation
2360 Hwy D
St. Charles, MO 63304
www.mdc.mo.gov

Forest Park Office

5595 Grand Dr., St. Louis, MO 63112
For reservations call (314) 877-1309.

25&28

Let's Play Opossum!

Saturday

10:30 a.m. – Noon

Tuesday

10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

(Ages 3-6) It's fun to study North America's only marsupial. We'll tell a story, learn a song and craft a paper bag puppet just to find out how unique the opossum really is. Then, if weather and time permit, we'll venture a short distance outside to search for opossum habitat. *Naturalist Program Supervisor: Colleen Scott.* (Reservations begin February 14.)



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Making Tracks

St. Louis Regional Calendar of Events

February 2006

Volume 06, Number 02



Maple Sugar Festival

By Anna-Lisa Tucker, Naturalist

With snow on the ground and the trees looking barren, many of us find every reason to stay inside the house where our furnaces keep us warm and cozy. After all, there's not much going on outside to give us reason to be outdoors, right? Wrong! February is the perfect time to grab your gloves, coat and hat and venture outside for a season of maple sugar magic!

Each year, the magic begins as the weather conditions start to change. With freezing temperatures through the night followed by warming temperatures throughout the day, changes begin to happen in the system of the maple trees. The sap, or sugar water, begins to flow with a purpose of producing new life for the upcoming spring. Fortunately, the Native Americans discovered that this sap, through a process of collection and boiling, would produce a sweet, savory syrup and sugar that enhanced many of their foods. Best of all, it could be done without any harm to the trees! As time passed and more Europeans settled in North America, they, too, were taught how to sweeten up their plates with this amazing natural resource. Unfortunately, as industry and big business came along, the art of making maple syrup was changed and lost.

Here at Rockwoods Reservation, we're keeping this season of celebration alive and full of magic. Join us February 18 from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. for our Maple Sugar Festival. You'll get the exciting chance to tap into the world of maple sugaring. You'll learn the exciting way sap is produced, discover the fascinating technique of identifying maple trees, participate in collecting and processing the sap, take part in some children's activities and, best of all, enjoy a mouth-watering sample. It will be fun for the whole family. The festival is free to everyone, so head down to Rockwoods Reservation this February and begin to discover one of the many magical happenings that lie within Missouri's forests—Maple Sugar Magic!



2360 Hwy D, St. Charles, MO 63304 Office hours are Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

For reservations call (636) 441-4554 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From Hwy 40 take Hwy 94 south to Hwy D; turn west on Hwy D for approximately 3 miles. The area entrance is on the north side of Hwy D. Visit www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/stlouis/buschca/

4 Dresser Island Hike

Saturday 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

(Adults) Eastern St. Charles County has become a wintering place for more than 70 trumpeter swans. These swans, bald eagles, white pelicans and many species of waterfowl may be seen during the winter months. Join us for a 6.5-mile hike to view this amazing concentration of wintering birds. Spotting scopes will be provided. *Naturalist: Marvin Staloch.* (Reservations begin January 23.)

4 Winter Tree I.D.

Saturday 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

(Ages 13 & up) Have you ever been in the woods during the winter and wondered what type of tree you were looking at? Join us as we discover various techniques on how to identify trees during the winter. This will be an indoor program with the option to go into the woods and put to use your new knowledge about tree identification. *Naturalist: Glenn Senter.* (Reservations begin January 23.)

6 Watching Eagles Soar

Monday 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. & 11 a.m. – Noon

(Preschool Ages 3-6) The bald eagle was chosen as the emblem of the United States because of its long life, great strength and imposing looks. Are bald eagles bald? How big are their nests? Discover the answers to these questions as we soar with the eagles. Come and have fun with eagle-themed activities and crafts. *Naturalists: Penny Elder & Kathy Hellmann.* (Reservations begin January 23.)

9 Camo Camp

Thursday 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.

(Ages 7-12) How much do you know about camouflage? Do you know enough to survive Camo Camp? Join our basic training course on how animals use camouflage to survive. Please dress for the weather, as we will be outside for part of the program. *Naturalist: Shanna Raeker.* (Reservations begin January 26.)

Busch Volunteer Milestones

| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| Mark Hunstien..... | 200 hours |
| Aaron Jungbluth..... | 300 hours |
| Angie Jungbluth..... | 300 hours |
| Glenn Senter..... | 500 hours |
| Trish Senter..... | 500 hours |
| Penny Elder..... | 500 hours |
| Lynn Le Page..... | 500 hours |
| Ed Leutwiler..... | 1500 hours |
| Karen Staloch..... | 2500 hours |
| Dick Baumann..... | 2500 hours |

11 Grow Native at Home

Saturday 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.

(Adults) It’s time to start thinking about spring gardening projects. Have you considered growing native? Naturally resilient native grasses, sedges, forbs, vines and trees are great for home landscaping. They solve common gardening problems and attract butterflies, hummingbirds, songbirds and other wildlife. Come and learn how to put native plants to work in your home landscape. *Naturalist: Ed Leutwiler.* (Reservations begin January 27.)

11 Night Hike

Saturday 5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

(Adults) Experience the sounds of the night during a moderate hike at the August A. Busch Memorial Conservation Area. We will hike the Busch Hiking/ Biking Trail, which is approximately 3.5 miles. This hike will occur two days before the full moon, so we may hear coyotes howling and owls calling for their mates. *Naturalist: Marvin Staloch.* (Reservations begin January 27.)



Natural Events to Watch for in the Month of February!

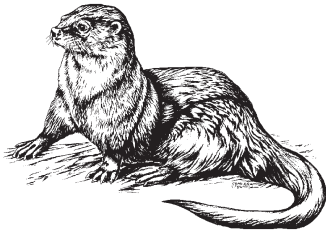
- Groundhogs breed this month
- Chickadees begin to sing- the first bird song of the year
- Great horned owls begin nesting



- Male cardinals begin territorial singing
- Canada geese search for mates
- Maple sap flows best in February– freezing nights and thawing days are the best

- White-tailed deer feed in groups now
- Screech owls begin nesting this month

- Watch for otters on frozen water
- Least shrews are born in late winter



- Look for large flocks of returning robins this month
- Coyotes breed through March–listen for their howls
- Walleye move onto shoals for spawning through April
- Chipmunks come out of hibernation
- Boxelder bugs are seen on warm days until April

2751 Glencoe Road, Wildwood, MO 63038 Office hours are Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

For reservations call (636) 458-2236 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-44 take Hwy 109 north 4 miles to Woods Avenue; left on Woods Avenue, and then immediately right on Glencoe Road. From Manchester Road take Hwy 109 south 2 miles to Woods Avenue; right on Woods Avenue, and then immediately right on Glencoe Road. Visit www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/stlouis/

Homeschool Specials

10 Maple Sugar Days

Friday 12:30 p.m. – 2 p.m.
(Ages 7 & up) Join us as we embark on a Missouri tradition: maple sugaring. We will learn the history of maple sugaring, identify a maple tree without its leaves and collect sap to boil down. Of course, you will also get the chance to enjoy samples of Rockwoods’ own maple syrup! This program is outdoors and part of the trail is not stroller accessible. *Naturalist: Anna-Lisa Tucker.* (Reservations begin January 27.)



14 Maple Sugar Days

Tuesday 12:30 p.m. – 2 p.m.
(Ages 7 & up) Join us as we embark on a Missouri tradition: maple sugaring. We will learn the history of maple sugaring, identify a maple tree without its leaves and collect sap to boil down. Of course, you’ll also get the chance to enjoy samples of Rockwoods’ own maple syrup! This program is outdoors and part of the trail is not stroller accessible. *Naturalist: Anna-Lisa Tucker.* (Reservations begin January 27.)

12 Valentine Wreath for the Birds

Sunday 2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
(All Ages) Migrating birds will be arriving just in time for Valentine’s Day. If you enjoy feeding birds and providing nesting materials for them, then join us to make a valentine wreath filled with their favorite foods and nesting materials. Only one wreath per family, please! *Naturalist: Karen Kelly.* (Reservations begin February 1.)



It's Maple Syrup Time! Create Maple Sugar Magic!

Saturday 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
(All Ages) What could be more enticing on a cold winter morning than a stack of flapjacks with real maple syrup? Everyone is invited to Rockwoods Reservation to learn about the history of maple sugaring. This free event will begin in the Education Center, where you will learn the history behind this old Missouri tradition. Be sure to bundle up the kids because we will head out to our sugar bush to collect some maple sap. Along the way, learn to identify a maple tree by its buds and unlock some of the mystery behind why the maple sap is flowing. Stop by the Sugaring Shed and watch sap boil down into tasty syrup! Note: In case of extremely severe weather, this program will be canceled. (No reservations necessary.)

25 Grow Native at Home

Saturday 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.
(Adults) It’s time to start thinking about spring gardening projects. Have you considered growing native? Naturally resilient native grasses, sedges, forbs, vines and trees are great for home landscaping. They solve common gardening problems and attract butterflies, hummingbirds, songbirds and other wildlife. Come and learn how to put native plants to work in your home landscape. *Naturalist: Ed Leutwiler.* (Reservations begin February 10.)

25 Recycled Treasures

Saturday 1:30 p.m. – 4 p.m.
(Families and Ages 5 & up) Why settle for store-bought paper when you can enjoy a workshop and make paper crafts and cards? Learn to make paper in several colors using recycled and other papers; seeds; and dried material. Please bring old towels, newspapers and an old cookie sheet. *Naturalist: Karen Kelly.* (Reservations begin February 10.)

Rockwoods Volunteer Milestones

| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| Michaela Turner..... | 200 hours |
| Jane Deschu..... | 200 hours |
| Bob Ziegler..... | 500 hours |
| John Ruprecht..... | 1000 hours |
| John Schroeder..... | 1500 hours |
| Karen Kelly..... | 4000 hours |

801 Strodtman Rd., St. Louis, MO 63138 Office hours are Wednesday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Saturday – Sunday from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

For reservations call (314) 877-6014 Wednesday through Sunday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-270 north take the Riverview Drive exit (last Missouri exit); go north approximately 2.8 miles. Riverview Drive becomes Columbia Bottom Road at its intersection with Larimore Road. The entrance is on the right-hand side. Visit www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/areas/bottom/

1 River Ramble

Wednesday 9 a.m. – Noon
(Ages 18 & up) What do beaver chews and cedar waxwings have in common? These are just a couple of things you might see on this leisurely 3-mile hike along the River’s Edge Trail. Bring binoculars and field guides if you have them. We’ll meet at the boat ramp. *Volunteer Naturalist: David Petree.* (Reservations begin January 18.)

4 Nature Crafts for Scouts

Saturday 10 a.m. – Noon
(Age 9-Bear Scouts) Calling all Bear Scouts to complete Elective 12, Nature Crafts! Explore leaf identification, animal tracks and plant seeds. We’ll also build waterscopes and bird callers to take home and enjoy! All materials provided. *Volunteer Naturalist: Lisa Reid.* (Reservations begin January 21.)

9 Let’s Get Wild!

Thursday 9 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.
(Ages 0-4) While it may be too cold to explore outdoors, we can still learn about wild animals, domestic animals and the differences between the two. Join us for stories, activities and crafts packed with animal I.D. and fun! *Volunteer Naturalist: Lisa Reid.* (Reservations begin January 26.)

11 Valentine Paper Making

Saturday 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
(Families) Put your heart in the right place this Valentine’s Day. Learn how to keep our forests growing while creating a valentine for someone you love! We’ll use recycled paper and natural materials. *Volunteer Naturalist: Kathy Schroeder.* (Reservations begin January 28.)

18 Howlin’ in the Neighborhood

Saturday 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
(All Ages) Coyotes howlin’ in the neighborhood? Yep, these highly adaptable mammals can live just about anywhere and, this time of year, they’re usually heard howling at night! Learn some coyote biofacts and explore these fascinating animals through Native American stories and a scent-tracking activity. Get an idea of what it’s like to be a real urban coyote! *Naturalist: Catherine McGrane.* (Reservations begin February 4.)

23 Columbia Bottom Conservation Book Club

Thursday 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
(Adult Readers) Not able to make it last month? Well, it’s not too late. You can still join us during our first book discussion and find out what books we’ve decided to read the rest of the year. Bring your coffee mug as well as your thoughts. We meet the fourth Thursday of each month. *Volunteer Naturalist: Denise Moorman.* (Reservations begin February 9.)

24 Snakes Alive!

Friday 1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
(Ages 7 & up) What was that shooting past my foot—a harmless garter snake or a venomous copperhead? Join us for a discussion on these cold-blooded Missourians. We’ll have a live snake to view. *Trail Ranger: Terry Cross.* (Reservations begin February 9.)

Homeschool Programs

16 Winter Signs of Life

Thursday 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
(Ages 7-15) When the groundhog came out to check for his shadow, what else might he have seen? Investigate the subtle signs of life found in our winter landscape to discover how plants and animals survive the cold. We’ll be both indoors and outside. Please dress for the weather. *Volunteer Naturalist: Pat Behle.* (Reservations begin February 2.)

22 A River, a Mammal and a State

Wednesday 10:30 a.m. – Noon
(Ages 7-12) The beaver has played a significant role in the exploration and settlement of the Missouri River as well as our state. Students discuss natural history of the beaver and its impact in Missouri. Students also explore the River’s Edge Trail for signs of beaver and other animals that inhabit the Missouri floodplain. *Naturalist: Catherine McGrane.* (Reservations begin February 8.)

Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center

11715 Cragwold Road, Kirkwood, MO 63122 Nature Center hours are daily from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

For reservations call (314) 301-1500 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-44 east in Kirkwood, take Watson Road, exit and turn north on Geyer Road. Follow Geyer Road 200 yards to Cragwold Road. Go 1 mile west on Cragwold Road. Visit www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/cnc/powder/

4 The Owls Have It!

Saturday 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
(Ages 7-12) What is “it”? Well, “it” is a host of adaptations that make owls unique. We’ll study owl adaptations and dissect their pellets to see what they eat. Staff Naturalist: David Bradford. (Reservations begin January 20.)

10 Woodpeckers in Missouri

Friday 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.
(Ages 7 & up) Come learn about the different species of woodpeckers that live in Missouri. After learning some facts and identification in the classroom, we will hit the trail to try to find these feathered friends and discover what they do during the winter. Staff Naturalist: Jada Barhorst. (Reservations begin January 27.)

11 Skull Detectives

Saturday 1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
(Ages 7-12) If you found an animal skull in the woods, what could you tell about the animal? Scientists have identified at least 50 skull structures that can be used to classify animal species. Just for the sake of fun and education, we’re going to take a close look at two of those skull structures, which can provide clues in determining an animal’s lifestyle. Volunteer Naturalist: Elizabeth Cosbey. (Reservations begin January 27.)



14 Valentines for the Birds

Tuesday 10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.
(Ages 3-6) Come join us for a festive holiday program for the birds. We’ll learn about our feathered friends and do a special valentine craft to take home. Volunteer Naturalist: Janyce Beyer. (Reservations begin January 31.)

Homeschool

16 Take Me With You!

Thursday 1:30 p.m. – 3 p.m.
(Ages 7 & up) PARASITES...Ahhhhh! Parasitism is a type of symbiotic relationship, but not all symbiotic relationships are harmful. In some situations, both critters benefit! In this program, we will explore three types of symbiotic relationships. We will start in the classroom, and then venture out on the Nature Center trails to look for these relationships. It could be cold, so please be prepared for the weather. Staff Naturalist: Kevin McCarthy. (Reservations begin February 2.)

It’s Feeding Time!

Come out to Powder Valley every Sunday at 1 p.m. to watch the frenzy as the fish in our 3000-gallon aquarium are fed. Watch and learn the different feeding techniques of these native big river fish as they go wild during their feeding. Species include channel catfish, blue catfish, flathead catfish, common carp, hybrid bass, white bass, shortnose and longnose gar, smallmouth buffalo, freshwater drum, gizzard shad and softshell turtle. (No reservations necessary.)

Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center

February 4 & 5

9 a.m. – 10 a.m. & 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.:
Dig Fossils
Eyewitness: Prehistoric Life
10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. & 1:30 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Life on Earth: Tape 1
Exploring Outdoor Missouri

February 11 & 12

9 a.m. – 10 a.m. & 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Eyewitness: Dinosaur
Eyewitness: Bird
10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. & 1:30 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Life on Earth: Tape 2
Wildlife Art II

February 18 & 19

9 a.m. – 10 a.m. & 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Critter Rock
My First Nature Video
10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. & 1:30 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Volume 6: MDC, Mushrooms & Music (Disc 9)
Fifty Years with Smokey Bear

February 25 & 26

9 a.m. – 10 a.m. & 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Adventures in the Backyard
Outside With Billy B.
10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. & 1:30 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Birding & Backyard Wildlife
Wild in the City
Creating an Urban Oasis
Outdoor Education/Kids & Conservation

Shown in the Auditorium - Free of Charge - Groups Welcome!
Children’s films: 9 a.m. – 10 p.m. & 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
All Ages films: 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. & 1:30 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Films are subject to change.
No reservations necessary.

February Hallway Exhibit Artists

American Art Alliance of St. Louis



Prominent St. Louis artists formed this nonprofit tax-exempt organization in 1941. The objectives are to preserve a high standard of art appreciation among its members and the community at large, to promote and stimulate quality art expression through exhibitions and competitions, and to stimulate professional growth with monthly lectures and demonstrations.

The American Art Alliance exhibit will focus on the natural world and will use all types of media including drawing, water color, oil pastel and water soluble oils.

Powder Valley Nature Shop Special

“Where Eagles Soar” DVD

The bald eagle became our national emblem in 1782. Their numbers declined, though, as people spread across the continent, destroying the eagles’ nesting habitat, as well as the birds themselves.

This movie tells not only how these magnificent birds became endangered in Missouri, but how they’ve been brought back to begin nesting and raising eaglets in this state.

Whether they’re swooping to catch fish, perched and preening, or feeding their young, the bald eagles in this MDC movie will delight you. Learn why this regal bird, whose numbers are once again on the rise, deserves our respect.

Throughout the month of February, this DVD can be yours for only \$8!

Powder Valley Volunteer Milestones

| | | | |
|------------------------|------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Karen Goellner..... | 2200 hours | Rita Mueller..... | 1300 hours |
| Priscilla Jenkins..... | 900 hours | Shirley Pearlstone..... | 1200 hours |
| Arta Kirk..... | 1200 hours | | |